Vol. V. Numb. 17.

THE OBSERVATOR.

Of the Uncertainty of the News. *Of the Benefit of* Intelligence. *Of Employing* Frenchmen *among us in time of* War. *A Touch on the* Rehearſal. *Of* Jure Divino.

From **Saturday** May the 11th, to **Wednesday** May the 15th, 1706.

Obſ. WELL, Honeſt *Country-man*, haſt any good *News?*

Country-m. Maſter, I am ſo Confounded about the *News*, that I don't know what to do. The *News* is as uncertain as the *Wind*. I fancy every Man at *London* has the Priviledge of Making his own *News*, as the *Tradeſmen* formerly had of Making their own *Half-Pence* and *Farthings:* For if one comes into Company of twenty in a day, they have all got a different Story; but every one ſpeaks as he would have it: Thoſe that Love the *Queen* and *Government*, they ſay, *The* French *Fleet is Beaten, and the Seige of* Barcelona *is Rais'd.* The *Perkinites* and *High-Flyers*, they ſay, *The Town is Taken.* And the *Wagerers*, they ſpeak according to their Betts: I think thoſe are a ſort of People that ought to be ſent to *Little-Eaſe.*

But, Maſter, what is the meaning there is no better certainty of our *News?* Does not the Queen allow *Intelligence-Money*, as our former Princes have done?

Obſ. Your *Sauce-Pan* will run over. The Queen does allow *Intelligence-Money*; and you have the *News* always when it comes: But every Body is not a Capable Judge in this Caſe. The *French* can have ſooner *Expreſſes* from *Catalonia*, becauſe they come by Land, and ours by Sea, a long way about, and expos'd to the uncertain Turns and Changes of Wind and Weather. Tho' I am ſatisfy'd a way might be found out to furniſh us with quicker *Intelligence* than we have at preſent.

Country-m. They tell me, That Mr. *Whiſton*'s *Pidgeons* are all Dead, Flown away, or Enter'd into the *French* Kings Service; I fancy they were not well Paid for their *Intelligence*; but, I am told he has parted with 'em *All*; and t'other day I ſaw him by a *Wood-ſide* a catching of *Nightingails.*

I am Confoundedly Vex'd that we have no more certain *Intelligence.* Why, Maſter, the Truth of the Fact does come to *France*, and han't we got *Spies* there that can give us Account of every thing? That Old Uſurper, *Oliver Cromwell*, knew every thing. He never baulk'd the *Cauſe:* He never ſpared *Money* for *Intelligence.* The *French* King could not let a Fart in his Cloſet but *Oliver* knew of it, and that made him Succeſsful.

Obſ. But, *Country-man*, our *Spies* Abroad han't been ſo well Serv'd as they ought to have been. I know ſomething of that Affair; and if you aſk Mr. *Puckle*, that now keeps a *Notary Publicks Office* ſomewhere about the *Exchange*, he'll tell you more of it.

Countrym. This was a thing much minded by our Anceſtors; they would peep into the Cabinets of Princes in ſpite of their Teeth. I have heard my Grannum tell a Story, how in the Reign of Queen *Beſs*, when the *Spaniards* were making great Preparations in fitting out an *Armado*, and no Body knew upon what Account, That one Gaſſer *Gondibert* was then Ambaſſador from *Spain* to the Court of *England*; the Queen knew that he had ſome Private *Deſtructions* ſent him from his Maſter, and ſo She ſent for *Cecil* Her Secretary, and told him That he muſt get an Account of thoſe Orders. *Cecil* Pumpt and Pumpt *Gondibert*, but to no purpoſe; but conſidering that he lov'd *Mutton* in Long-Coats, he got a Cunning Pretty Wench, about the bigneſs of a *Whore*, and put her in *Gondibert*'s way, he ſnapt at the Bait, and a time was appointed when they ſhould lye together, which being come, ſhe, in the Night, having put her *Don* to Sleep, ſearch'd his Cloaths, but could not find this Paper; upon which ſhe went to Bed again, and rummaging his Shirt ſhe found it Sow'd up in the Collar, and by this means got Notice of the *Invaſion* that afterwards happened, and ſo we were enabled to make Proviſion againſt it. *Intelligence* is the Life of Action; he that has the firſt Notice of a thing has much the better end of the Staff. If we can't get *Rogues* Abroad, we may get *Whores* at Home, or ſome Body, any Body, I don't care who, to give us *Intelligence.*

The *French* King, they tell me, has learn't this Trick of *Oliver Cromwell*; and has his Spies in *All* the Courts of *Chriſtendom:* Nay, he has *Frenchmen* in ſeveral Offices under Foreign Princes; we have ſome of 'em in *England*; but you know ours are *Proteſtants*, as coming hither for *Religion*, but God knows what they are in their Hearts. But be it how it will, certainly our *Engliſh* Nation is not ſo bare of Men of *Senſe* and *Parts* as that there is really a Neceſſity to employ Foreigners in our Offices, eſpecially conſidering that we have ſo many Brave Men that have ventur'd Life and Limb in the Service of their Country, who are Neglected and want Bread.

Obſ. 'Tis a thing to be wonder'd at and lamented, that ſuch Encouragement ſhould be given to *Frenchmen*, eſpecially in time of *War* with *France*; half an Eye may ſee the Danger and Inconvenience of ſuch a Practice. Men are Naturally enclined to love their Country, the Place of their Nativity, and can't help ſerving it, as occaſion permits. I have ever eſteem'd it as a wrong Step in our Nobility and Gentry to make *Frenchmen* the chief of their Domeſticks; but certainly 'tis very dangerous to the *Publick* to employ *Frenchmen* in Eminent Poſts, or for Great Officers, either in the *State*, *Army*, or *Fleet*, to Employ them, either as *Secretaries*, or *Clerks.* Their *Fidelity*, how Specious ſoever their Pretences may be, is to be Suſpected. They are in a Condition to inform the *Enemy* of our *Deſigns*;

and

end certainly no Wise Man would ever put a Trust in a Suspicious Person, when he has others to Employ, whose Services to their *Country* must set aside all Doubts of their *Fidelity*.

Country-m. Master, I can't endure this Practice. We have had as Good Men in *England* as any in *France*. And tho' I can't *Parle*; nor, indeed, do I think it any Credit to speak the Language of *Slaves*, yet, I am sure, we have Men that do understand these things as well as the best *French Fop* of 'em *All*.

They tell me, Master, That there's a Fine *French Cock-Pheasant*, that Struts about and Crows in Her Majesties *Cock-Pit*, and is mightily admir'd by some sort of People. Now I'll lay a Bushel of *Wheat* to a *Cherry Stone*, that I'll take one of my *Dunghill-Cocks*, that has as fine Feathers, as good Spurs, a better Comb, that can Peck as well, Crow as well, and Fight as well as this Fine *French Pheasant*. But, Master, should he Crow so loud as that any of the Queens Business should be heard to *France*, I would quickly dispatch him; I would wring his Head off. But, Master, is their no way to get speedier *Intelligence?*

Obs. Roger, that's none of our Business: If we should make never so good *Proposals* on that Head it would signifie nothing. We live in a Time, *Quo nec Vitia nostra, nec eorum Remedia, ferre Possumus*, in which *We can neither bear our Evils, or the Remedies of them.* 'Tis a dangerous Post to be a *State-Tinker*. The *Kettle* of *Government* is to be Mended only by those that are Employ'd about it. We may Wish and Pray for the *Good Success* of our *Armies* and *Navies*, this is our Duty; and when the *Good News* comes we may Rejoyce.

Country-m. Well, Master, and I hope we shall Rejoyce: I have laid by a whole Load of *Faces* against the Happy Minute; and I'll give a whole Hogshead of *October*; our Faces shall Shine as bright as the Fire; we'll be as Merry as the *Maids*. I Impatiently wait that time. But, Master, since we are Barren of *News*, let us Discourse a little of Mr. *Rehearsal*. He says, *All you have said of him is false.*

Obs. You Lye, has been the best Argument that Author ever yet produc'd. He denies plain Matter of Fact. He falsely puts *Great Britains just Complaint* on St. *James Montgomery*; the *Pamphlet* Reflecting on the late Queen, he says, *He did not Write, or ever heard of it*; tho 'tis Evident he did Write it; And that *Virulent Libel* was Answered by the Bishop of *Salisbury* some Months after the good Queen Died.

The Story of his being *Taken* going to *France* is so *Notorious*, that none but one of a Front like himself can deny it. But since we must be forc'd to explain our selves, for the *Publick Satisfaction*, and our own *Justification*; the *Messengers* Name that was turn'd out for it was *Thompson*; he was turn'd out by my Lord *N*----. The Sum that *Lesley* left in his Hands as a *Pawn*, was thirty *Guineas*: And *Thompson*'s Family have reason to Curse the Name of *Lesley* to this Hour, being reduc'd by his means.

Country-m. This is a sad Equivocating Fellow. I wish he ben't a *Papish Priest*. But, Master, I think the *Messenger* deserv'd to be turn'd out; cou'dn't he ha' gone with *Lesley* to the *House of Office*: And he leaving thirty *Guineas* as a Pledge with the *Messenger* for his coming again, seem'd to be a Bargain, that the Messenger should keep the Money if he went away. But 'twas indeed highly Base and Dishonourable for him to complain against the Messenger upon that Account, who had given him his Liberty for so small a Sum. But there is no obliging a *Nonjuring Priest*; they'll betray you, they'll get you Sacrific'd for doing of 'em the greatest Kindness; and may they serve me so when I do 'em any.

Obs. Ever since this *Scribbler* has been employ'd by the *Faction* to Write against the *Government*, he has come it with such a Front of *Impudence* and *Falshood* as never was before known. His *Arguments* are weak, and his *Accusations* carry nothing of *Truth* in 'em. He accuses the *Review* of *Blasphemy*, in calling the Doctrines of *Jure Divino* Foolish, *Absurd*, &c. Now what *Law*, either of *God* or *Man*, has made this *Blasphemy?*

Country-m. Yes, Master, You'll find it in the 24th of *Adam* and *Eve* Cap. 40.

Obs. If ever there were a *Foolish Doctrine*, that is one, I mean in the Sense of the *Faction*. *God* has a *Divine Right* to Govern his *Creatures*; we must all submit to the *Eternal Law* of *Heaven*, and be Govern'd by the *Supream Lawgiver*, whose *Just* and *Equitable Laws* are promulgated in the Scriptures as unalterable by any *Humane Power*: The *Creatures* have also a *Jus Divinum*, a *Divine Right* to what, by the appointment of *Providence*, they enjoy in the World, but the Dominions of *Nature* being all on a Level, no one has a *Divine Right* to Domineer or Rule over the rest, till such time as by mutual Compact such a *Right* is given; and the *Governed* as well as the *Governour* have a *Divine Right*, the one to the *Executive*, or *Supream Power*, the other to their *Liberty* and *Property*, but this only while they observe the Terms of the Covenant, and Mutual Compact among themselves; a Prince that *Governs* according to *Law* is *Jure Divino*, *King*, but he who Exercises a *Despotick Power* is *Jure Diabolico*, a *Tyrant*. *Just* and *Legal Government* is from *God*, but *Arbitrary* and *Tyrannical Government* from the *Devil*. If the *Rehearsal* is minded to resume his Argument of *Jure Divino*, in which he has been so often baffled, I shan't in the least spare my Pains in answering him.

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